



## News Release

**For Immediate Release**

October 10, 2006

Contact:

Rebecca L. Ward

Office: 801-538-6682

### **Department of Health Launches Flu Vaccine Finder Web Site for the 2006-7 Influenza Season**

SALT LAKE CITY – For the second year, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) is providing the **Flu Vaccine Locator, an online search tool**, to assist individuals in finding influenza vaccine clinics during the 2006-2007 influenza season. This tool is designed to help people locate influenza vaccine clinics anywhere in Utah by entering the county and date most convenient for them. The Locator can be found by visiting the Web site [www.immunize-utah.org](http://www.immunize-utah.org) and clicking on Flu Vaccine Locator.

The Flu Vaccine Locator will also provide information regarding cost, types of insurance accepted, ages served, and what other vaccines are available. “This tool will be especially helpful, since influenza vaccine availability changes so quickly,” said Linda Abel, Immunization Program manager, UDOH. Because it is early in the season, consumers will want to check the Web site often to look for new clinic information.

Another online resource available for consumers and health care providers during the influenza season is the UDOH influenza Web page. Updates on influenza-related statistics, vaccine recommendations and disease facts are available by visiting the UDOH influenza Web page at <http://health.utah.gov/flu>.

Certain people are at greater risk of getting flu and should get the flu vaccine every year.

- Children aged six to 59 months of age, especially children six to 23 months\*
- Children and adolescents (aged 6 months to 18 years) who are receiving ‘long-term’ aspirin therapy
- Women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- People who have illnesses such as such as diabetes, asthma or heart, kidney or lung disease

-MORE-

- People who have required regular medical follow-up or hospitalization during the previous year due to serious illnesses such as diabetes, kidney dysfunction or immunodeficiency
- People who have any condition that can compromise breathing
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities
- People over 50 years of age
- Household contacts and caregivers of young children or people with a serious illness
- Health care workers

Vaccine manufacturers anticipate that sufficient flu vaccine supplies will be available for the 2006-2007 season. However, due to the timing of vaccine distribution, vaccine supplies may be not be available in all areas. The public is advised to contact their provider, call the Immunization Hotline at **1-800-275-0659**, or check the **Flu Vaccine Locator** site for more information.

The UDOH continues to stress additional ways to reduce the risk of getting sick, such as:

- Covering your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze and throwing the tissue away
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Staying away from other people when you are sick

Influenza symptoms usually begin within one to two days after being exposed, and may include a sudden onset of fever, muscle aches and pains, cough and/or sore throat.

Prescription antiviral medications can reduce the duration of flu if taken within two days after symptoms begin. If you get the flu, rest, drink plenty of liquids, avoid using alcohol and tobacco and take medication to relieve the symptoms.

\*Flu vaccine is a covered vaccine for children birth through 18 years who are eligible for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program.

# # #

*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*